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MEMORANDUM FOR THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR/INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Procedure for Making Spot Estimates

1. The Egyptian cabinet crisis and the French revelation of possible military cutbacks, both of which came up over last week-end, prompt me to make a suggestion for the handling, as between O/NE and O/CI, of those crises which are "current" but also have important estimative implications requiring the judgment of the Board.

2. The problem in these crises is to get two things and to avoid two things. The two things to get are (a) prompt and accurate reporting and evaluation of the current intelligence, and (b) as soon as the situation permits, a considered judgment from the Board. In some cases the gravity of the event will call for a coordinated IAC estimate. The things to avoid are (a) hasty and over-extended estimating by the O/CI evaluators, and (b) inadequate current intelligence reporting by the estimators. If O/CI has the ball alone, the first danger exists. If O/NE has the initial responsibility, the second danger exists, and also the danger of diverting O/NE man-effort to the detriment of the basic job of making National Estimates. (No intelligence man can object if his work is rendered meaningless by a swift change in events — as happened to the O/NE man working Sunday on Egypt — but O/NE manpower is severely limited to the size most efficient for estimating. The Board's meeting schedule is also very tight.)

3. Therefore, when you acting alone, or Mr. Douglass and I agreeing together, feel that there is a current crisis of major implications, could we not do the following:

- a. Designate a Joint Task Team of at least one man from each office, to communicate directly with each other.
- b. Make O/CI responsible for reporting of the crisis in its initial stages and so long as it continues hot, with the understanding that the O/NE man will be kept continuously informed of the reporting and evaluation as it is made.

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2. If a more considered judgment appears desirable (to you or to Mr. Douglass and me together) even though the crisis continues unabated, make O/NE responsible for drafting a memo and submitting it to the Board for forwarding to the Director, with the understanding that O/CI will be kept fully informed, will give factual support to the memo during its preparation, and will come to Board meetings if the Board wishes.
4. This procedure corresponds in general to what now often actually happens. The added move of designating a team will be a slight administrative burden, but I think its benefits would be great.
5. I am sending a copy of this memo to Mr. Douglass. Perhaps we can discuss it when we next meet, or at your call.

SHERMAN KENT
Assistant Director
National Estimates

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